

Near Neighbor Surveys: Magnolia/Renton

December 2003



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division

Prepared for King County
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Co.

Alternative formats available
206-684-1280 or TTY Relay: 711

Near Neighbor Surveys

Methodology

- Interviews conducted Dec. 11-15, 2003
- Magnolia Residents: n=100; M.O.E = ± 10 points
- Magnolia Business: n=35; M.O.E = ± 17 points
- Renton Business: n=35; M.O.E = ± 17 points
- **Note:** Renton residents were not surveyed because of a lack of residential population surrounding the facility. A separate mail-in survey is being prepared.
- **Note:** Some numbers reflect “n” size (the actual number of respondents/businesses), and others reflect percentages. Where appropriate, notes were added to show whether a percentage or “n” was used.

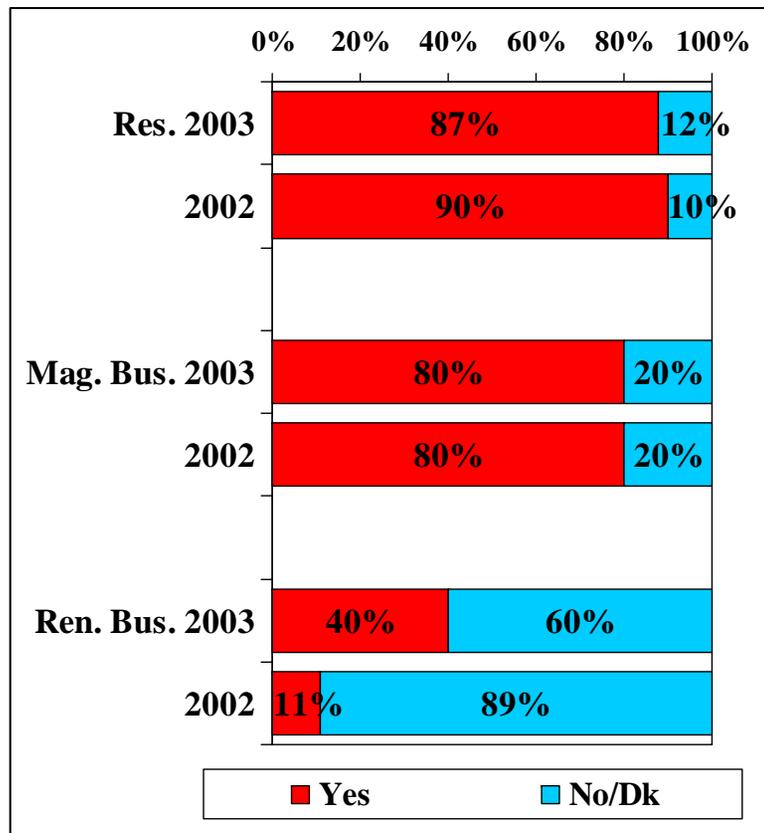
Wastewater Treatment Plant

Summary of Findings

- In all three surveys, *a strong majority of respondents* say the King County wastewater treatment facility has been a good neighbor.
- Even after being informed of the treatment plant, *very few residents and businesses* say they experience any impacts from the facility.
- Respondents have an *overall favorable opinion* of King County's wastewater treatment facility in their area, with much of the sentiment falling in the *strongly favorable* category.
- The highest priority for all three populations are *to respond to citizens' complaints, questions, or concerns within 24 hours and to explore new methods of odor control*.
- King County's wastewater treatment facilities received *above average performance ratings* in each of the areas tested in the survey.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Awareness and Opinions

Are you aware of a wastewater treatment facility near your business/in you area? (Q4)

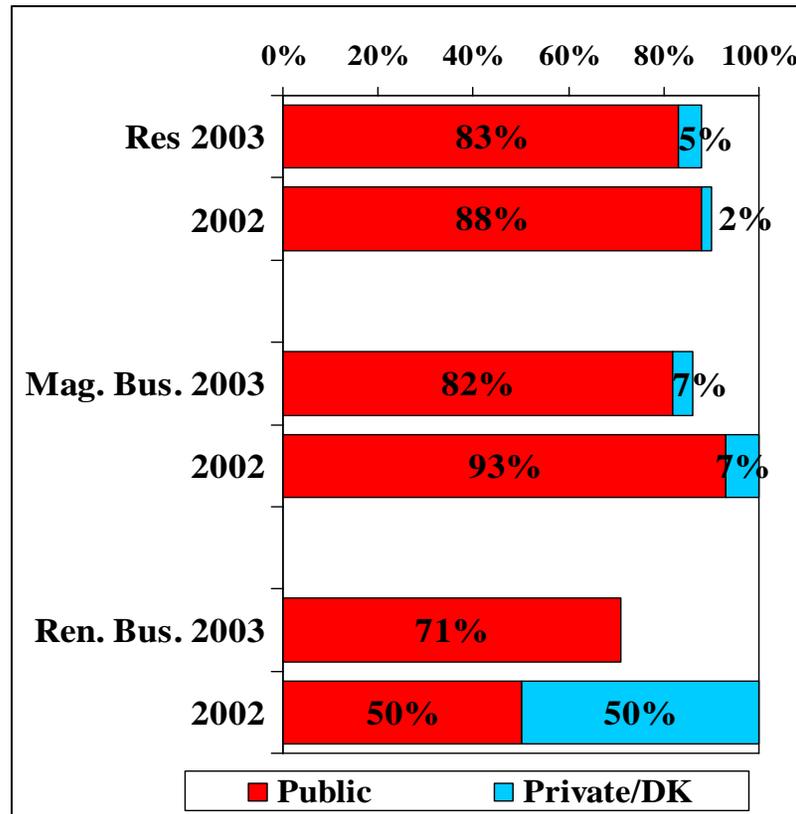


➤ Awareness of the treatment plant in both of the Magnolia surveys continues to exceed awareness in the Renton business survey.

- Nine out of 10 (87%: n=87) residents are aware of the facility in Magnolia.
- Eight out of 10 (80%: n=28) businesses in Magnolia are aware of the treatment plant.
- 40% (n=14) of businesses surveyed in Renton are aware of the wastewater treatment plant. Increase from 11% in 2002.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Awareness and Opinions

From what you know, is the wastewater treatment plant owned and operated by a private company, or a public agency? (q6)



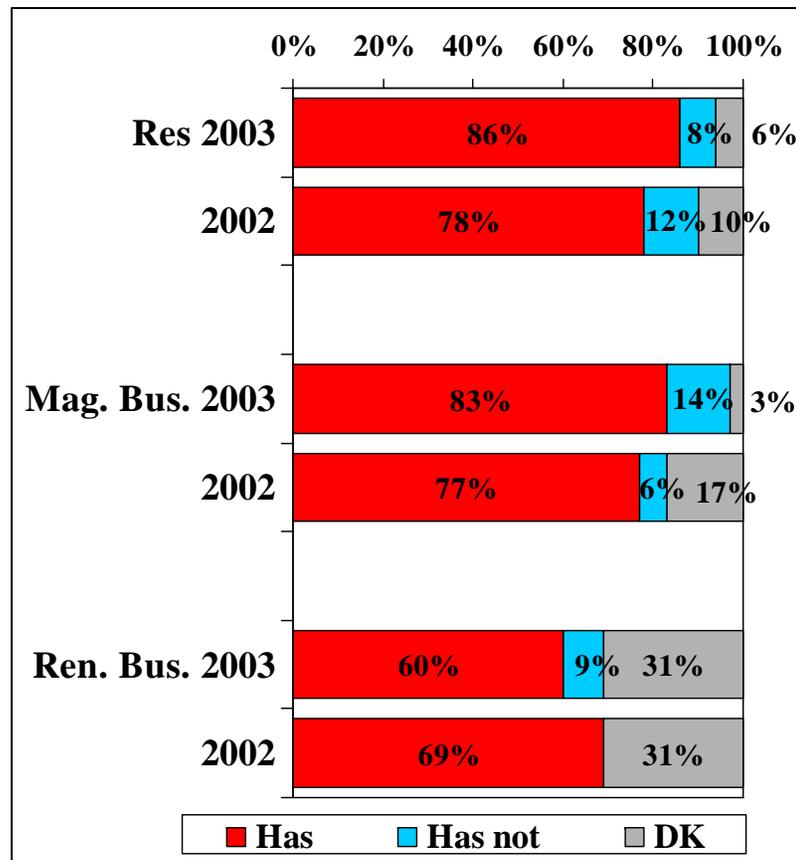
➤ Magnolia businesses and residents are also more aware about the *ownership and operation* of the plant.

- 83% of the residents (n=72), and 88% of the businesses (n=23) who are aware of the facility in Magnolia think that the plant is owned and operated by a public agency.
- 71% of Renton businesses who are aware of the facility (n=10) can correctly identify the plant as a facility that is owned and operated by public agency.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions

As you may know, King County's Department of Natural Resources and Parks, operates a waste water treatment plant in Renton/Magnolia. Generally speaking do you feel the treatment plant has been or has not been a good neighbor? (q7)



➤ *The Balanced Scorecard measurement:* In each population surveyed, a strong majority of respondents feel the treatment plants have been *a good neighbor*.

- 86% (n=80) of Magnolia residents, 83% (n=27) of Magnolia businesses, and 60% (n=24) of Renton businesses feel the treatment plant has been a good neighbor.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions: Magnolia Residents

What are the top one or two reasons you think King County has or has not been a good neighbor? (q8)

<u>Has been a good neighbor:</u>	<u>(n)</u>	<u>(n)</u>
	2002	2003
1. Unobtrusive, minimal effects	29	28
2. Hidden from sight	-	16
3. Responsive to community concerns	-	12
4. Maintains proper standards	8	5
5. No smell	4	5
6. No traffic problems	5	4
<u>Not been a good neighbor:</u>	<u>(n)</u>	<u>(n)</u>
	2002	2003
1. Odor is a problem/it smells	12	5
2. Trucking issues	3	3
3. Pollution	-	2
4. Concern for parks	2	
5. Mismanaged/resources	2	
6. Neighborhood congestion	2	

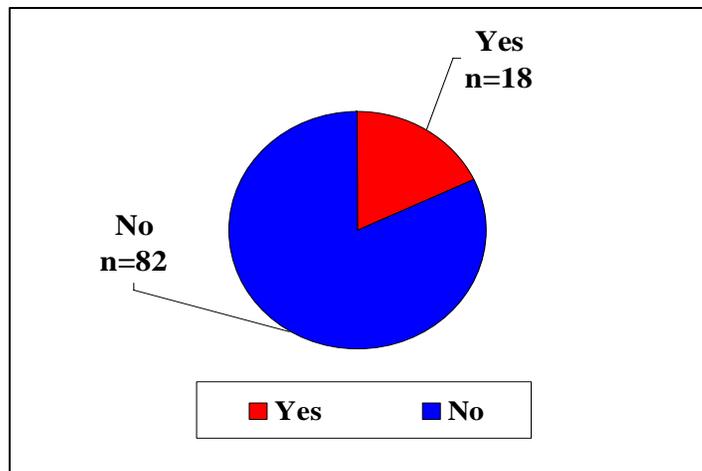
- The most common reason Magnolia residents say that King County has been a good neighbor is the *lack of any noticeable negative impacts* (n=28).

**The numbers in the chart reflect the number of respondents, not the percentage.*

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions: Magnolia Residents

Knowing that there is a wastewater plant in your area, have you experienced any impacts that could be a result of the wastewater facility? (q9)



What impacts have you experienced?: (n)

1. Bad smell	7
2. Trucking issues	6
3. Pollution	4

**The numbers in the chart reflect the number of respondents, not the percentage.*

New questions in 2003:

- Four out of five (n=82) residents say they *experience no impacts*.
 - One out of five (n=18) Magnolia residents say they experience some impacts that could be the result of the wastewater facility.
 - 7 residents experience a bad smell, 6 state the truck traffic, and 4 say pollution.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions: Magnolia Businesses

What are the top one or two reasons you think King County has or has not been a good neighbor? (q8)

Has been a good neighbor:	(n)	(n)
	2002	2003
1. No troubles/unobtrusive	5	18
2. Hidden from sight	-	3
3. Responsive to concerns	-	2
4. Maintains proper standards	-	2
Not been a good neighbor:	(n)	(n)
	2002	2003
1. Odor is strong	1	4
2. Increased traffic	-	1
3. Should relocate	-	2

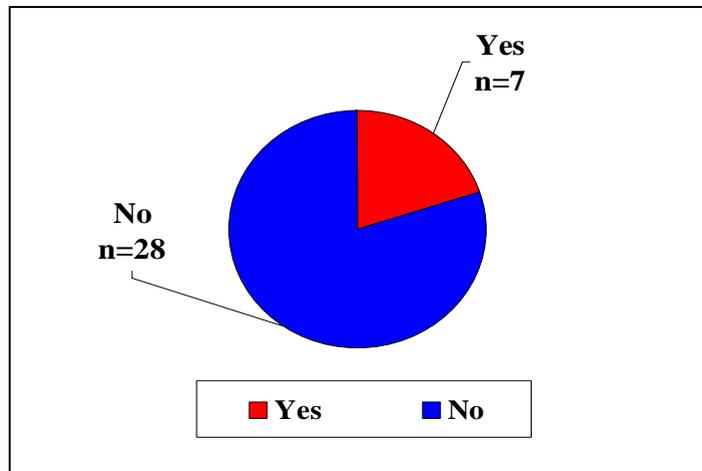
**The numbers in the chart reflect the “n” size (number of businesses out of 35), not the percentage.*

- As with residents, the top response Magnolia businesses give for why KC has been a good neighbor is the *lack of any noticeable impacts* (n=18).
 - 4 businesses say King County has not been a good neighbor because the *odor is strong*. However, considering the small sample size, this is only four out of the 35 businesses surveyed.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions: Magnolia Businesses

Knowing that there is a wastewater plant in your area, have you experienced any impacts that could be a result of the wastewater facility? (q9)



What impacts have you experienced?: (n)

1. Trucking issues	4
2. Bad smell	3

**The numbers in the chart reflect the number of respondents, not the percentage.*

New questions in 2003:

- As with residents, four out of five (n=28) businesses say they *do not experience any noticeable impacts*.
 - Seven (n=7) of the Magnolia businesses say they experience some impacts that could be the result of the wastewater facility.
 - 3 of the businesses experience a bad smell and 4 state the truck traffic.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions: Renton Businesses

What are the top one or two reasons you think King County has or has not been a good neighbor? (q8)

<u>Has been a good neighbor (n)</u>	<u>(n)</u>	<u>(n)</u>
	2002	2003
1. No troubles	11	16
2. Hidden from sight	-	3
3. Responsive to concerns	-	2
4. Maintains proper standards	-	2
5. No noise	1	
<u>Has not been a good neighbor (n)</u>	<u>(n)</u>	<u>(n)</u>
1. Bad odor	-	4
2. Should relocate	-	2
3. Causes increased traffic	-	1
4. Trucking in other towns' waste	-	1

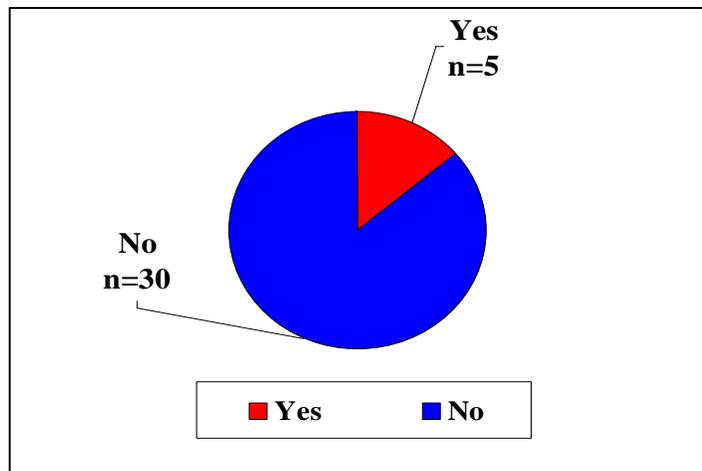
**The numbers in the chart reflect the number of businesses, not the percentage.*

- 19 of 35 Renton businesses say *no noticeable impact* (16 “no trouble” and 3 “hidden from sight”) is the reason King County has been a good neighbor.
 - Four (n=4) said King County has been a bad neighbor because of “bad odor.”

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions: Renton Businesses

Knowing that there is a wastewater plant in your area, have you experienced any impacts that could be a result of the wastewater facility? (q9)



What impacts have you experienced?: (n)

1. Bad smell	3
2. Loss of business	1
3. Rates are too high	1

**The numbers in the chart reflect the number of businesses, not the percentage.*

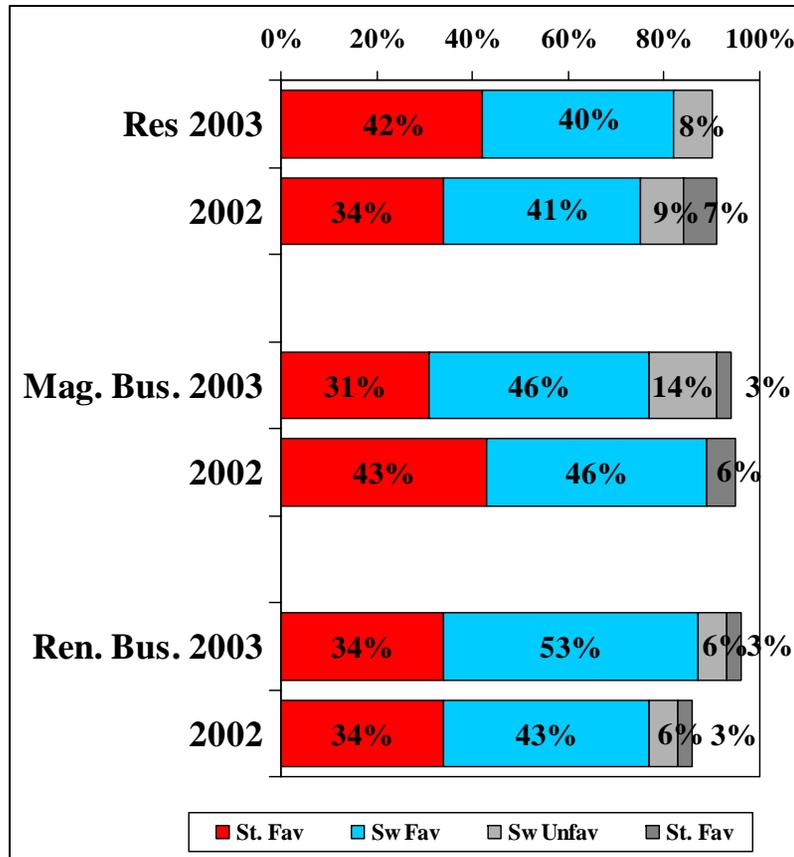
New questions in 2003

- More than four out of five (30 of 35) of Renton businesses say they experience *no impacts from the facility*.
- Five Renton businesses say they experience some impacts that could be the result of the wastewater facility.
- Three of the businesses experience a bad smell, and one states a loss of business.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Awareness and Opinions

The wastewater treatment plant in Renton/Magnolia is used to protect public health and the environment by treating the region's wastewater. Given what you have just heard, do you have a strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable opinion of King County's Waste Water Treatment Plant? (q11)



➤ Among all three populations surveyed, informed opinions of King County's wastewater treatment plant are *favorable*.

- Magnolia residents: 82% Fav (75% in 2002)
- Magnolia businesses: 77% Fav (79% in 2002)
- Renton businesses: 87% Fav (77% in 2002)

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Performance and Priorities: Magnolia Residents

I'm going to read you a list of things that King County waste water treatment plant is doing to be a better neighbor in Magnolia. For each of the following items, please tell me how high a priority that item should be for the waste water treatment plant. (q18-q23)

<u>Priority</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
1. Explore methods of odor control	3.90	3.92
2. Respond to complaints w/in 24 hrs	4.01	3.73
3. 24-hour hotline	3.15	3.36
4. Reduce truck trips	3.08	3.28
5. Improve landscaping	3.00	3.11
6. Offer plant tours	2.83	2.77

**Scale: 1 to 5 where 1 means the lowest priority and 5 means the highest priority.*

- *The top two priorities for King County are respond to complaints within 24 hours and explore new methods of odor control.*
 - The lowest priority for King County is offering plant tours to the community.
 - These priorities are reflective of the priorities from last year's survey.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Performance and Priorities: Magnolia Residents

From what you know or have heard, please grade King County on each of the following elements as it relates to its waste water treatment plant in Magnolia.(q10-q17)

<u>Performance</u>	<u>Average Grade</u>	
	2002	2003
1. Appearance/upkeep of facility	B+	A-
2. Acceptable business hours	B	A-
3. Minimizing facility's impacts	B	B+
4. Controlling noise from trucks	B	B+
5. Controlling odors from plant	B	B+
6. Minimizing impacts on traffic	B	B+
7. Listening/responding to complaints	C+	B
8. Keeping community informed	C+	B-

**Scale: A to F where A means excellent and F means failing.*

- Overall, King County received *above average performance ratings* from Magnolia residents in each area tested in the survey and *improved a half letter grade or more* in each area since last year.
 - The lowest ratings, yet still above average, came in the areas of *keeping the community informed* (B-) and *listening/responding to citizens' complaints* (B).
 - King County's strongest rating is in *appearance/upkeep of the facility* (A-), and *maintaining acceptable business hours* (A-).

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Performance and Priorities: Magnolia Businesses

I'm going to read you a list of things that King County waste water treatment plant is doing to be a better neighbor in Magnolia. For each of the following items, please tell me how high a priority that item should be for the waste water treatment plant. (q18-q23)

Priority	2002	2003
1. Respond to complaints w/in 24 hrs	4.00	4.29
2. Explore methods of odor control	3.90	4.21
3. Improve landscaping	2.66	3.66
4. 24-hour hotline	3.22	3.54
5. Reduce truck trips	3.24	3.30
6. Offer plant tours	2.85	2.77

**Scale: 1 to 5 where 1 means the lowest priority and 5 means the highest priority.*

- Similar to the resident survey, the *top two priorities* among Magnolia businesses are *responding to complaints within 24 hours* and *exploring new methods of odor control*.
 - The lowest priority for King County among Magnolia businesses is *offering plant tours to the community*.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Performance and Priorities: Magnolia Businesses

From what you know or have heard, please grade King County on each of the following elements as it relates to its waste water treatment plant in Magnolia.(q10-q17)

Performance	Average Grade	
	2002	2003
1. Appearance/upkeep of facility	A-	B
2. Acceptable business hours	B+	B
3. Controlling odors from plant	B	B
4. Listening/responding to complaints	C+	B
5. Minimizing facility's impacts	B	B-
6. Controlling noise from trucks	B	B-
7. Minimizing impacts on traffic	B	B-
8. Keeping community informed	B	C+

**Scale: A to F where A means excellent and F means failing.*

- King County received *above average performance ratings* from Magnolia businesses in each area tested in the survey.
 - The lowest rating came in the area of *keeping the community informed (C+)*.
 - While some ratings have decreased since last year, because of the large margin of error these changes are not statistically significant.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Performance and Priorities: Renton Businesses

I'm going to read you a list of things that King County waste water treatment plant is doing to be a better neighbor in Magnolia. For each of the following items, please tell me how high a priority that item should be for the waste water treatment plant. (q18-q23)

Priority	2002	2003
1. Explore methods of odor control	4.31	4.15
2. Respond to complaints w/in 24 hrs	4.03	4.13
3. 24-hour hotline	4.06	3.36
4. Reduce truck trips	3.17	3.09
5. Improve landscaping	3.17	2.94
6. Offer plant tours	3.03	2.52

**Scale: 1 to 5 where 1 means the lowest priority and 5 means the highest priority.*

- *As in last year's survey, the top priorities among Renton businesses are explore new methods of odor control, provide a 24-hour hotline, and respond to questions, concerns, or complaints within 24 hours.*

Wastewater Treatment Plant Performance and Priorities: Renton Businesses

From what you know or have heard, please grade King County on each of the following elements as it relates to its waste water treatment plant in Magnolia.

Performance	2002	2003
1. Appearance/upkeep of facility	B+	B
2. Minimizing facility's impacts	B	B
3. Controlling noise from trucks	B	B
4. Acceptable business hours	B	B
5. Minimizing impacts on traffic	B	B
6. Listening/responding to complaints	B	B-
7. Controlling odors from plant	B-	B-
8. Keeping community informed	C+	C+

**Scale: A to F where A means excellent and F means failing.*

- King County received *above average performance ratings* from Renton businesses in each area tested in the survey.
 - The lowest rating came in the area of *keeping the community informed about issues that might affect them* (C+), which was the same in the 2002 survey.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

What can King County do to be a better neighbor for Magnolia residents?

In addition to everything that you have heard, what are one or two things King County can do to be a better neighbor as it relates to the waste water treatment plant in your area?

	<u>(n)</u>
Nothing	21
Reduce the smell/odor	11
Respond to complaints	9
Control the traffic	7
Improve landscaping	5
Provide more public information	5
Relocate	4
Avoid contaminating the area	3
Other	9
Don't know	26

- The *top response* for what King County can do to be a better neighbor was *nothing* (n=21).
- *Reducing the smell/odor* (n=11) and *responding to complaints* (n=9) are the most popular suggestions among Magnolia residents.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

What can King County do to be a better neighbor for Magnolia businesses?

In addition to everything that you have heard, what are one or two things King County can do to be a better neighbor as it relates to the waste water treatment plant in your area?

	<u>(n)</u>
Nothing	15
Provide more public information	7
Control odor	3
Avoid contaminating the area	2
Respond to complaints	2
Relocate	2
Other	3
Don't know	1

- As with the residents, *the top response* from Magnolia businesses for what King County can do to be a better neighbor is *nothing* (n=15).
- The most frequent substantive suggestion is *to provide more public information* (n=7) and *control odor* (n=3).

Wastewater Treatment Plant

What can King County do to be a better neighbor for Renton businesses?

In addition to everything that you have heard, what are one or two things King County can do to be a better neighbor as it relates to the waste water treatment plant in your area?

	<u>(n)</u>
Nothing	13
Eliminate the odor	6
More public information	5
Improve hours of operation	1
Other	1
Don't know	9

- The most frequent substantive suggestion made by Renton businesses is to *eliminate the odor* (n=6) and *provide more public information* (n=5).

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Review of Findings

- In all three surveys, *a strong majority of respondents* say the King County wastewater treatment facility has been a good neighbor.
- Even after being informed of the treatment plant, *very few residents and businesses* say they experience any impacts from the facility.
- Respondents have an *overall favorable opinion* of King County's wastewater treatment facility in their area, with much of the sentiment falling in the *strongly favorable* category.
- The highest priority for all three populations are *to respond to citizens' complaints, questions, or concerns within 24 hours and to explore new methods of odor control*.
- King County's wastewater treatment facilities received *above average performance ratings* in each of the areas tested in the survey.